

MEMBER NEWS

Focus on a Federation Member: The Carteret County Historical Society

By Carol Smith, Museum Educator, Carteret County Historical Society

The Carteret County Historical Society (CCHS) is a non-profit organization mostly run by volunteers. There is a full time administrator and a part time custodian who provide continuity in service.

Both visitors and local residents can come to the History Place to discover more about our coastal heritage, to research their ancestors in the Jack Spencer Goodwin Research Library, or to browse in the museum store.

A tour of the museum begins with artifacts from the earliest settlers of the area, the Tuscarora, Coree and other Native American Indian tribes. There are spear points for touching and various stone tools for viewing. Enlarged John White sketches show how the Native Americans lived at the time of the Europeans' arrival. There are also examples of early fishing and whaling tools, a major part of Carteret County's history. Models of more "modern" fishing and sailing vessels line the museum walls, reflecting life along the water.

Our very own Civil War heroine, Emeline Pigott, is featured in a large corner of the museum. When her love, a Confederate soldier, was killed, she became a southern spy. She was captured near New Bern with about 30 pounds of contraband in her skirt. Visitors can examine a reproduction of her skirt and try to imagine how she managed to walk with a skirt full of supplies for the Confederate Army. (Her contraband included pounds of sugar, Army boots, and shirts as well as smaller items such as combs.)

The center of the museum features vignettes of life in the early 20th century. Clothing, furniture, dolls, a pump organ, and even a dentist's office and a train ticket booth are included. In fact, a small model train will circle high above with the push of a button.

We expect to open a new exhibit this fall, *Warriors of Carteret County*, which will feature artifacts and displays from the Civil War through Vietnam. You might want to come watch it grow this summer!

Many people also visit the History Place to take advantage of the vast resources for genealogical research in the Jack Spencer Goodwin library. It is packed with

books, magazines, military records, photos, and computer information. Volunteers are there daily to help people who want to learn more about their ancestors.

The museum store features many books about Carteret County, many written by residents of the county. The store also features photos, artworks, jewelry and gifts for children (especially pirate-themed items!).

The Rodney Kemp Gallery is home to rotating exhibits. Last summer it was home for an exhibit about our Shackleford horses built by the local Tar Heel Historian children. (The CCHS sponsors a Tar Heel group from Morehead Elementary School and is proud that this group has won N.C. Chapter of the Year for two of the last three years.) This gallery might feature a local resident or local collection or art show. Changing exhibits keep things fresh and new. The long hallway is also fresh and new as local artists display their work on a monthly basis.

There is a large auditorium for CHHS events as well as for rentals. There's been everything from wedding receptions to spelling bees to classical music performances. Also in the building is a new addition, the Infusion Café. It's a great place to stop by for a bite to eat or a hot or cold drink before or after a trip to the museum.

The CCHS is supported by donations, grants, fund-raisers and dues. It publishes a history journal, *The Researcher* twice a year, a bi-monthly newsletter, and various books related to Carteret County.

We are open Tuesday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. plus the first Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (winter hours). Summer hours will bring more openings on Saturdays. Find us at 1008 Arendell Street in downtown Morehead City, look us up on the web at www.thehistoryplace.org or call (252) 247-7533 for current information on exhibits, events or to check opening hours.



Visitors to the History Place, which is run by the Carteret County Historical Society, can tour exhibits, research their ancestors in the library, or browse in the museum store.